

Message Text

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EXDIS FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG FROM UNA

FOL RPT BUENOS AIRES 0048 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO ASUNCION &
MONTEVIDEO DTD 04 JAN 8

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 0048

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS OAS, AR, UY

SUBJECT OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN MONTEVIDEO:
THE ARGENTINE VIEW

REF: MONTEVIDEO 5768; ASUNCION 5198

1. I BELIEVE ALSO THAT THE MULTILATERAL
APPROACH THROUGH HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATE
COUNTRIES IN THE OAS APPEARS TO BE THE
MOST APPROPRIATE AND BENEFICIAL ROUTE,
NOT ONLY FOR OUR OWN INTERESTS BUT ALSO
TO KEEP THE COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS
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PAGE 02 STATE 002469

A LIVE AND JOINT EFFORT.

2. AS FOR ARGENTINA, IT CAN BE EXPECTED
TO SUPPORT NEIGHBORING URUGUAYS INVITATION
TO HOST THE OAS AND TO FOLLOW URUGUAYS PROBABLE LEAD
IN OPPOSING ANY LINKAGE BETWEEN URUGUAYAN VENUE AND
THAT COUNTRY'S AGREEMENT TO RECEIVE THE IAHR. ALTHOUGH

ARGENTINAS STAND ON THE IAHRC HAS SOFTENED SOMEWHAT IN RECENT MONTHS (THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN DISCUSSING THE POSSIBILITY OF AN IAHRC VISIT TO ARGENTINA SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE) AND GOA HAS EXERCISED CONSIDERABLE CARE NOT TO EXACERBATE ITS BILATERAL RELATIONS (PARTICULARLY WITH THE US) OR, AS OF LATE, TO WORSEN ITS INTERNATIONAL IMAGE WITH A CONTENTIOUS STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS, ARGENTINA CAN BE EXPECTED TO ARGUE AGAINST TYING POLITICAL CONTINGENCIES (AN IAHRC VISIT) TO AN OFFER TO HOST THE OAS AS AN AFFRONT TO NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY. ARGENTINA, OF COURSE, WILL HAVE ITS OWN SITUATION IN MIND: IT WOULD BE INDIGNANT AT ANY EFFORT TO IMPOSE AN IAHRC VISIT FROM THE OUTSIDE AGAINST ITS OWN WISHES AND IT WOULD NOT WANT TO BE SUBJECT TO THE POTENTIAL HUMILIATION OF HAVING AN OFFER TO HOST THE OAS BE THROWN OUT BY DISAPPROVING MEMBER STATES. DESPITE ITS PROBABLE SUPPORT FOR URUGUAY IN THE VENUE QUESTION, ARGENTINA HAS SHOWN IN THE PAST SOME CONCERN NOT TO BECOME TOO CLOSELY IDENTIFIED WITH ITS NEIGHBORS URUGUAY AND CHILE WHOSE INTERNATIONAL REPUTATIONS AS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATORS ARE EVEN MORE TARNISHED THAN ITS OWN. IT WOULD PROBABLY TRY TO AVOID BEING DRAWN INTO A POLARIZING DEBATE PITTING THE SOUTHERN CONE COUNTRIES AGAINST THE REST OF THE OAS.

3. ARGENTINE OFFICIALS HAVE REVEALED TO US THAT THEY
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PAGE 03 STATE 002469

HAVE THEIR OWN PLANS FOR DEALING WITH THE IAHRC. IN RESPONSE TO A SUGGESTION BY ASST SECRETARY TODMAN MADE ON HIS NOVEMBER 21 VISIT TO BUENOS AIRES THAT ARGENTINA ACCEPT AN IAGRC VISIT, DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER ALLARA REPLIED THAT HE HAD ALREADY INITIATED A DIALOGUE WITH THE IAHRC DURING HIS TRIP TO WASHINGTON IN NOVEMBER AND THAT ALTHOUGH AN ARRANGEMENT HAD NOT YET BEEN REACHED, HE WAS OPTIMISTIC. (BUENOS AIRES 9289). ALLARA ADDED THAT THE MATTER OF A VISIT BY THE IAHRC TO ARGENTINA WOULD HAVE TO BE DECIDED AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT. ON A LATER PRIVATE OCCASION, FONMIN HUMAN RIGHTS SPOKESMAN ARLIA TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WANTED TO KEEP IN ARGENTINE HANDS THE INITIATIVE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH IAHRC OVER A POSSIBLE VISIT TO ARGENTINA, AND FURTHERMORE, THAT IT FELT IT COULD "EDUCATE" THE IAHRC INTO FINDING ARGENTINA THE VICTIM AND NOT GUILTY PERPETRATOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. HERE AGAIN ARLIA HAS REVEALED GOA'S PERSISTENT BELIEF THAT ARGENTINA IS A VICTIM OF MISUNDERSTANDING AND AN INTERNATIONAL DEFAMATION CAMPAIGN AND THAT A FIRST HAND VISIT (SUCH AS THAT OF USG OFFICIALS) CAN DEMONSTRATE ARGENTINAS ESSENTIAL

"INNOCENCE" TO SKEPTICAL OUTSIDERS. CASTRO UNQUOTE
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